AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) Base particles for supporting a surfactant, obtainable by spray-drying a slurry comprising a water-soluble polymer (A), an inhibitor for forming a coating film (B) and a water-soluble salt (C) other than the inhibitor for forming a coating film, wherein the surfactant is contained in an amount of from 0 to 3% by weight of the base particles; and

wherein a weight ratio of the water-soluble polymer to the inhibitor for forming a coating film in a base particle constituting the base particles, that is water-soluble polymer/inhibitor for forming a coating film, is from 0.1 to 100.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the slurry further comprises a water-insoluble inorganic compound (D).

4. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the inhibitor for forming a coating film is an alkali metal halide.

5. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the inhibitor for forming a coating film exists on the surface of a base particle and/or its vicinity.

6. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the inhibitor for forming a coating film exists as crystals in the base particle.

7. (Currently Amended) Base particles for supporting a surfactant, obtainable by spray-drying a slurry comprising at least a water-soluble polymer (A) and an alkali metal halide, wherein ~~the~~ a surfactant is contained in an amount of from 0 to 3% by weight of the base particles, and wherein a weight ratio of the water-soluble polymer to the alkali metal halide in a base particle constituting the base particles, that is water-soluble polymer/alkali metal halide, is from 0.1 to 100.

8. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing base particles for supporting a surfactant, the base particles containing ~~the~~ a surfactant in an amount of from 0 to 3% by weight, comprising the step of spray-drying a slurry comprising a water-soluble polymer (A), an inhibitor for forming a coating film (B) and a water-soluble salt (C) other than the inhibitor for forming a

coating film, wherein a dissolution ratio of Component (B) in the slurry is at a level sufficient to inhibit formation of a coating film on the surface of the resulting base particles.

9. (Currently Amended) Detergent particles having an average particle size of from 150 to 750 μm and a bulk density of 500g/L or more, wherein 1 to 100 parts by weight of a surfactant is supported in 100 parts by weight of base particles for supporting the surfactant, obtainable by spray-drying a slurry comprising a water-soluble polymer (A), an inhibitor for forming a coating film (B) and a water-soluble salt (C) other than the inhibitor for forming a coating film, wherein ~~the~~ a surfactant is contained in an amount of from 0 to 10% by weight of the base particles.

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10. (Currently Amended) The detergent particles according to claim 9, wherein the detergent particles have an uni-core property.

11. (Previously Amended) A detergent composition comprising the detergent particles of claim 9 or 10.

12. (Currently Amended) The base particles according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the inhibitor (B) is selected from the group

consisting of halides of alkali metals and halides of alkali earth metals.

C1 cont'd

13. (Previously Added) The detergent particles according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the inhibitor (B) is selected from the group consisting of halides of alkali metals and halides of alkali earth metals.